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SUBJECT: MEDIA REACTION REPORT - Saddam Trial Moussaoui Trial  
Islam Immigration Issues  
PARIS - Wednesday, April 05, 2006

(A) SUBJECTS COVERED IN TODAY'S REPORT:

Saddam Trial  
Moussaoui Trial  
Islam Immigration Issues

B) SUMMARY OF COVERAGE:

Once again the CPE, demonstrations and the government crisis are today's lead and editorial stories. France Soir headlines "What a Slap in the Face!" and reports that 3 million demonstrators marched across the nation. For Liberation it is "Time to Abrogate" while Le Parisien goes for the jugular and asks: "Villepin, What For?" As the unions meet today with UMP majority leader at the Assembly, Bernard Accoyer, to discuss possible amendments to the CPE legislation, the tension between PM Villepin and Interior Minister Sarkozy is noted in Le Figaro, while Liberation points to Villepin's haughty "I decide, you execute" attitude, saying that the Prime Minister "is living in the wrong century." Liberation also carries an op-ed penned by National Assembly Representative Arnaud Montebourg, entitled: "The End for Villepin's Whims" and in his weekly column Alain Duhamel writes: "Sarkozy is boosted by Villepin. who will not give up to a rival he hates. Sarkozy has won a tactical victory over Villepin and the President and finds himself at the center of a daunting battle. but also the uncontested leader of a clearly weakened right."

Le Figaro interviews Laurence Parisot, the President of the MEDEF (Association of business leaders): "There is first the question of method: democratic principles must be respected. The crisis has crystallized a bigger concern about employment, but employment flexibility must be shared by everyone, not just youth. I recommended against the CPE. Now that we have a crisis, we need to end it quickly, for our nation's image abroad and for the sake of our economy."

International news focus on Saddam's trial and the new charges involving the 1998 Kurdish extermination. Le Figaro reports that "Saddam will have to answer to accusations of genocide." (See Part C) The Moussaoui trial is also featured: Le Figaro entitles its report "Defense Tries to Save Moussaoui in Spite of Himself" (See Part C) while La Croix interviews Moussaoui's mother's legal representative, Patrick Boudoin: "I am very pessimistic about his avoiding the death penalty. He is his own worst enemy. I hope that despite the fact that the U.S. administration wants to make him into a scapegoat. they will not make a martyr of Moussaoui. His story could give birth to new terrorists." In Le Parisien, Moussaoui's mother says: "If they kill him, a million little Zacarias will be born." France Soir carries a report about France's position: "Yesterday the Foreign Ministry reiterated its opposition to the death penalty (for Moussaoui) and recalled that `it had received the assurance that the information it passed on to the prosecution would not be used to support a death penalty verdict.'"

Le Figaro also reports on the Supreme Court's decision with regard to Jose Padilla's case: "This is a small victory for the White House. even if no answer has been brought to the question: can the U.S. government detain a citizen indefinitely on U.S. soil. This and other cases fuel the debate about separation of powers between the judiciary and the executive branches."

Le Figaro and Liberation note Tom Delay's decision to resign by mid-June. Says Le Figaro "while the opposition will be deprived of a scandal it was planning to milk, the White House will also be losing a strong ally in Congress."

France Soir and broadcast media report that: "Hamass has recognized Israel." A statement, sent to the UN, by the head of Palestinian diplomacy Mahmoud Zahar, implicitly acknowledges Israel's right to exist. Zahar also underscores that the Palestinian government is prepared to resume discussions with the Middle East Quartet.

Les Echos carries an op-ed on immigration issues, in support

of a "successful integration of Moslem immigration in the U.S." which could serve as an example for Europe. (See Part C)

Economic news is dominated by the Thales-Alcatel agreement, which comes on the heels of the Alcatel-Lucent merger, in order to safeguard Alcatel's sensitive satellite sector.

(C) SUPPORTING TEXT/BLOCK QUOTES:

Saddam Trial

"Saddam Accused of Genocide"

Adrien Jaulmes in right-of-center Le Figaro (04/05): "In international law, genocide is the most serious crime, but it is also the hardest to prove. The witnesses may be auditioned in Kurdistan, to save them a dangerous trip to Baghdad and the death threats which have been weighing on the witnesses to the ongoing trial."

Moussaoui Trial

"Moussaoui Could Get Death Penalty"

Alain Salles in left-of-center Le Monde (04/05): "Moussaoui got what he wanted, and the 'show can go on' as he had said during one of his court outbursts. When he presented himself as one of the participants in the 9/11 attacks, he ruined the efforts of the defense, which tried to save him from himself. The emotional impact of his testimony and his lack of repentance weighed more in the balance than any possible doubts."

"Saving Moussaoui Despite Himself"

Guillemette Faure in right-of-center Le Figaro (04/05): "The challenge for Moussaoui's lawyers is how to save him despite himself. But for the prosecution, the hardest part of the job is now behind. During the second phase of the trial, experts will explain how racism and Moussaoui's 'difficult youth' influenced his choices and more broadly they will show how second generation immigrants are easily manipulated by terrorist organizations."

Islam Immigration Issues

"Immigration, a Stroke of Luck"

Stephan Richter in right-of-center Les Echos (04/05): "Everyone agrees that when it comes to integrating its Muslim immigrants, the U.S. does better than Europe. For the Americans, Europe's mistake was to use social welfare rather than social integration. It may be that selective immigration explains the difference. A large majority of the Muslims who immigrated to the U.S. were highly qualified and spoke good English. They were economically motivated: the U.S. offered the best return on investment. In Europe, the situation is radically different: Muslim immigrants are poor and devoid of professional training. In welcoming immigrants who did not have the proper weapons to succeed, Europe played an unlucky card. This does not excuse the many mistakes Europe made which compounded the situation. America adopted a policy of selective immigration, not Europe. Europe can be faulted for its lack of vision, while America remains faithful to the message inscribed on the Statue of Liberty." STAPLETON